REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussions, is respectfully requested. Claims 1-24 are currently pending in the application. No claims have been amended, added or canceled by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,961,590 (hereinafter "the '590 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,018,762 (hereinafter "the '762 patent"). This ground for rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 will be used as an exemplary claim to explain the patentability of independent claims 1, 10, 13, and 22. Claim 1 recites "determining whether an e-mail message in the consolidated e-mail storage has been deleted from the external e-mail server ..., and if a match is found, then deleting the corresponding e-mail message from the consolidated storage of the local e-mail server." The Office Action cites Figure 12, col. 12, line 20 – col. 13, line 15, and col. 15, lines 25-67 as anticipating that limitation; however, those assertions are unfounded. The '590 patent allows for files to be downloaded to a local store, but once there, the '590 patent does not disclose that the system tracks when the corresponding message is deleted from the external e-mail server such that the local consolidated store should be updated to delete it locally as well. As such, the '590 patent does not teach "deleting the corresponding e-mail message from the consolidated storage of the local e-mail server" under the claimed condition of having determined "whether an e-mail message in the consolidated e-mail storage has been deleted from the external e-mail server."

To further illustrate the differences, Applicants have submitted herewith annotated copies of Figure 8 of the '590 patent. (Applicants note that Figure 12 is not helpful in this discussion.) In those annotated figures, and in the discussion of Figure 8 from col. 11, line 57 to col. 14, line 8, the synchronization feature of the '590 patent is described as a downloading process only. There is no checking of the external e-mail server for the existence of a

message that is in the consolidated e-mail storage of the local e-mail server. In such a case, the '590 patent keeps stale messages that are deleted by the present invention.

The Office Action now alleges that the '762 patent teaches the process of "then deleting the corresponding e-mail message," but Applicants respectfully submit that the '590 and '762 patents do not teach the determining step as claimed, so the "then deleting" step alleged to exist by the Office Action must actually be deleting based on another condition. Looking at Figures 1, 2 and 4 of the '762 patent, the only substantive figure appears to be Figure 4, and in that figure, the message deleting is based on "syncmarks" and not "determining whether an e-mail message in the consolidated e-mail storage has been deleted from the external e-mail server."

Therefore, the combination of the '762 patent and the '590 patent contains the same deficiency as each of the references individually. Thus, the combination of references does not render obvious the subject matter of claim 1. Since dependent claims 2-9 all depend from claim 1, those claims are also patentable over the cited references.

Claim 10 recites a similar mail deletion step, step (E), as was discussed above with reference to claim 1. Claim 10 is patentable for reasons analogous to the reasons given for the patentability of claim 1 above.

Claim 13 recites a system including a consolidated e-mail storage. As discussed above with respect to claim 1, the '590 patent does not inform the local consolidated storage of what e-mail messages have been deleted from the external e-mail server. Thus, the '590 patent does not disclose that the consolidated e-mail storage would include the two claimed states which require communication from the external e-mail server. Accordingly, claim 13 and its dependent claims, claims 14-21, are patentable over the cited combination of references.

Claim 22 is similarly patentable for the reasons set forth for the patentability of claim 13 above. In addition, dependent claims 23 and 24 are patentable based on their dependence on claim 22.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome and in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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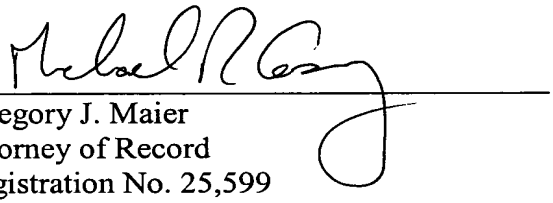

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